

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00106 241050Z
ACTION NEA-10

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P R 241000Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2243
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0106

FOR THE SECRETARY AND NEA ASST SECY ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, QA, US
SUBJ: PROPOSAL THAT SECRETARY VISIT GULF STATES DURING MIDEAST
TOUR

1. SUMMARY: I SUGGEST THAT SECRETARY BRIEFLY EXTEND HIS REPORTED
MIDDLE EAST TRIP TO INCLUDE FIVE GULF STATES. BENEFITS FOR
MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, ENERGY PROBLEMS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS

COULD MAKE VISITS MOST WORTHWHILE IN TERMS OF US INTERESTS.
ALTERNATIVELY, I SUGGEST THAT ASST SECY ATHERTON VISIT AREA OR
AT LEAST THAT CHIEFS OF MISSION FROM AREA STATES NOT BEING VISITED
BY SECRETARY BE CONVOKED TO MEET WITH HIM AT CONVENIENT
LOCATION. END SUMMARY

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2. ASSUMING PRESS REPORTS ARE ACCURATE THAT SECRETARY TO VISIT
MIDDLE EAST LATE IN FEBRUARY, I SUGGEST THAT IT BE CONSIDERED
THAT TRIP BE BRIEFLY EXTENDED TO INCLUDE STOPS IN KUWAIT, BAHRAIN,
QATAR, UAE AND OMAN. THIS COULD BE WHISTLE STOP AFFAIR
REQUIRING ONE OR MAXIMUM OF TWO DAYS, WITH ACTIVITY IN EACH
COUNTRY CONFINED TO MEETING WITH RULER.

3. I BELIEVE THAT SECRETARY'S INVESTMENT OF SMALL AMOUNT OF TIME AND ATTENTION NOW TO THESE COUNTRIES COULD PAY US SUBSTANTIAL DIVIDENDS ON MIDEAST SETTLEMENT, ENERGY PROBLEMS AND BILATERAL MATTERS. QUICK SHOW OF INTEREST FROM TOP-LEVEL OF NEW ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOLLOWUP TO PRESIDENT'S JAN 20 MESSAGE TO FOREIGN AUDIENCES EXTENDING HAND OF COOPERATION AND SOLICITING DIALOGUE. VISIT COULD INJECT CONSTRUCTIVE AND POSITIVE TONE INTO OUR RELATIONS WITH AREA STATES, THUS CAPITALIZING ON GREAT EXPECTATIONS AND GOODWILL FELT HERE FOR NEW TEAM IN WASHINGTON.

4. RE SUBSTANTIVE BENEFITS, THREE OF COUNTRIES--KUWAIT, QATAR AND UAE--ARE MAJOR BANKROLLERS OF ARAB CONFRONTATION STATES. THEY MAY HOLD AN ULTIMATE INFLUENCE IN SHAPING ARAB POSITIONS ON EQUITABLE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, AND THERE COULD BE MUCH TO GAIN BY GIVING THEM OUR VIEWS DIRECTLY ON SETTLEMENT. (A VISIT BY SECRETARY JUST BEFORE SCHEDULED MARCH 7 ARAB SUMMIT WOULD BE MOST TIMELY.) IN ADDITION, KUWAIT, QATAR AND UAE ARE IMPORTANT OIL PRODUCERS AND OPEC MEMBERS ON DIFFERENT SIDES OF TWO-TIER PRICE SITUATION; DIRECT DIALOGUE COULD ADVANCE PRODUCER/ CONSUMER UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SHORT AND LONG TERM ENERGY PROBLEMS. BILATERAL MATTERS WITH BAHRAIN AND OMAN, AS WELL AS THESE COUNTRIES' IMPORTANCE IN REGIONAL CONTEXT, WOULD ALSO WARRANT TOP LEVEL ATTENTION, BUT I SHALL NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK FURTHER ON MATTERS WHICH DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF MY COLLEAGUES. AT THIS POINT, I WOULD ADD ONE WORD OF CAUTION--VISIT SHOULD BE TO ALL FIVE STATES OR NONE, SINCE, IN CASE OF QATAR, ITS BEING LEFT OUT OF ITINERARY WHICH INCLUDED ANY OF ITS NEIGHBORS WOULD PUT QATARI NOSES OUT OF JOINT TO THE POINT OF FRACTURE, CONFIDENTIAL

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(AND MAKE ME SORRY THAT I EVER SUGGESTED VISIT).

5. I FULLY APPRECIATE CONSTRAINTS ON SECRETARY'S TIME AND THAT OTHER PRIORITIES COULD PRECLUDE ACCEPTANCE OF MY PROPOSAL. THEREFORE, I SUGGEST ALTERNATIVELY THAT ASST SECY ATHERTON MIGHT PEEL OFF SECRETARY'S PARTY AT END OF MIDDLE EAST TRIP AND DO TOUR OF GULF AT MORE LEISURELY PACE. IF THIS TOO NOT POSSIBLE, I ASK AT LEAST THAT AREA CHIEFS OF MISSION FROM COUNTRIES NOT BEING VISITED BY SECRETARY BE CONVOKED IN CONVENIENT LOCATION FOR MEETING WITH SECRETARY. PAGANELLI

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